



U.S. SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
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**NEWS
RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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STATEMENT OF SEC CHAIRMAN WILLIAM H. DONALDSON

Washington, D.C., Feb. 22, 2005 - Statement of SEC Chairman William Donaldson concerning the IRS's announcement today regarding its executive stock option settlement initiative:

"I commend the IRS for resolving this matter. It is important that leaders in our capital markets avoid inappropriate conflicts of interest such as those described in the IRS's executive stock option initiative. The IRS's settlement initiative is a step forward in the effort to protect the integrity of our capital markets. We will continue to work closely with the IRS and other government agencies to fulfill our mandate."

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